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ABSTRACT

This document contains the proceedings of a policy forum that reviewed past and present federal priorities regarding education of children and youth who are deaf and hard of hearing. Included in the document are prioritized goals and recommendations generated by the policy forum participants for the education of these children. Goals and recommendations are provided on personnel preparation, early identification and intervention, educational outcomes, language acquisition, literacy, communication, and transition. High priority recommendations for future federal support include: (1) require all applications for funding in the area of personnel preparation to show how teachers are prepared to enable students to meet state and local standards; (2) fund longitudinal studies on literacy development; (3) fund longitudinal studies that focus on employment; (4) prepare and disseminate a report on language acquisition in children with hearing impairments; (5) fund research and model demonstration projects that identify and demonstrate effective ways of meeting language and communication needs of infants and children with hearing impairments; (6) continue to identify, develop, and support communication technologies that facilitate interpersonal communication; and (7) fund projects that demonstrate and disseminate exemplary models of career education and school-to-work transition that incorporate technology. (CR)

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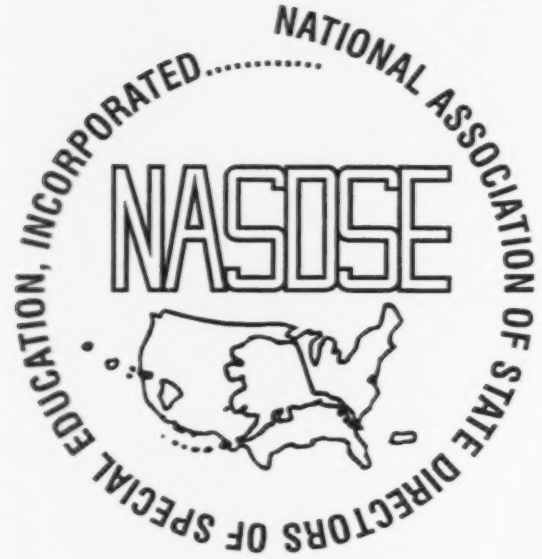
Education of Children and Youth Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing: Past, Present and Future Federal Support

Policy Forum - September 14-15, 1998

Proceedings Document



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Project FORUM at National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) is a cooperative agreement funded by the Office of Special Education Programs of the U. S. Department of Education. The project carries out a variety of activities that provide information needed for program improvement, and promote the utilization of research data and other information for improving outcomes for students with disabilities. The project also provides technical assistance and information on emerging issues, and convenes small work groups to gather expert input, obtain feedback and develop conceptual frameworks related to critical topics in special education.

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Abstract

This document contains the proceedings of a policy forum entitled, *Education of Children and Youth Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing: Past, Present and Future Federal Support*, held in Washington, DC on September 14-15, 1998. The policy forum was convened by Project FORUM, a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE). Participants included representatives from national, state and local projects in the field of deafness and hearing loss, as well as university researchers, members of the Council on the Education of the Deaf and the American Society for Deaf Children, consumers who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, parents and family advocates, administrators of schools for the deaf, state education agency staff, and persons representing the interests of culturally diverse persons who have hearing loss.

The purpose of the policy forum was to review past and present federal priorities regarding education of children and youth who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and to begin to develop a plan for implementing federally-supported work in the future to improve results for children and youth who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Included in the proceedings document are prioritized goals and recommendations generated by the policy forum participants for the education of children and youth who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Education of Children and Youth Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing: Past, Present and Future Federal Support

Background and Goals of the Policy Forum

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was reauthorized and amended in 1997. Since that time, there has been a focus on the many changes made to the Part B formula grant program, which provides funds to direct service programs. However, significant changes have also been made in the discretionary grant programs. These changes have resulted from social, educational and political forces, and are reflected in the new and amended laws. Over a thirty-year period, the discretionary programs grew, and eventually numbered fourteen before the law resulted in their restructuring. The 14 programs were then consolidated to form 6 general authorities. The six authorities include: (1) Research and Development, (2) Technical Assistance and Dissemination, (3) Personnel Preparation, (4) Parent Information Centers, (5) Technology and Media and (6) State Improvement Grants. In addition, there is a set-aside amount to conduct a national assessment of the implementation of IDEA.

Federal funding for a number of projects in the area of deafness and hearing loss will be ending and the United States Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) will soon be writing new funding priorities. In order to obtain input from the field at this critical juncture, OSEP asked Project FORUM at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) to convene a policy forum of stakeholders from the field of deafness and hearing loss to discuss the direction of federal support in this low-incidence disability area. The purpose of the policy forum was to provide an opportunity for staff from OSEP and OSERS to converse with stakeholders about issues relevant to the formulation of new priorities.

The goals of the policy forum were:

- to review past and present IDEA Part D priorities regarding education of children and youth who are deaf and hard of hearing, and
- to begin to develop a plan for implementing future Part D-supported work to improve results for children and youth who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Preparation for the Policy Forum

Selection of Participants

Project FORUM and OSEP staff worked closely to select participants who would represent different perspectives on the education of children and youth who are deaf and hard of hearing. A concerted effort was made to select persons involved at the national, state and local levels. Participants included university researchers, members of the Council on the Education of the Deaf and the American Society for Deaf Children, consumers who are deaf and hard of hearing, parents

and family advocates, administrators of schools for the deaf, state education agency staff, and persons representing the interests of culturally diverse persons who have hearing loss. The participant list can be found in *Appendix A*.

Background Materials

Background materials were recommended by participants and other researchers in the field and mailed prior to the policy forum meeting. The materials covered topic areas relating to early identification, language acquisition, communication, literacy, educational outcomes, personnel preparation and transition. All participants received the following documents:

Anderson, G.B., & McGee, S. (1998). Creating school to work initiatives for deaf students. Perspectives in Education and Deafness, 16(5), 4-7.

Bowe, F.G. (1993). Getting There: Update on recommendations by the Commission on Education of the Deaf. American Annals of the Deaf, 138(3), 304-8.

Fischgrund, J.E. (1994, Fall). Lessons from a flowergirl: Expectations and the education of children who are deaf. The School of Education and Human Services Newsletter - Gallaudet University.

Fischgrund, J.E. (1992, October). Preparing teachers for bilingual/bicultural environments. Paper presented at the Gallaudet University Teacher Education Forum, Washington, DC.

Fischgrund, J.E. (1992, Spring). What kind of sign? Pennsylvania Speech and Hearing Association Bulletin.

Gennaoui, M., & Kretschmer, R.E. (1998). Teachers as researchers: Supporting professional development. The Volta Review, 98(3), 81-92.

Marschark, M. (1993). Language acquisition. Psychological development of deaf children (pp.98-126). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Padden, C. (1997, March). Reading and deafness. University of California, San Diego, CA: The National Academy of Sciences for the Committee on Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children.

Padden, C., & Ramsey, C. (1998). Reading ability in signing deaf children. Topics in Language Disorders, 18(4), 30-46.

Ross, M. (1998). Amplification for children: The process begins. Freeman E. McConnell Memorial Lecture. [On-line]. Available: http://www.audiology.org/ross/rossampc.html.

Self Help For Hard of Hearing People, Inc. (1998). Position statement on residual hearing. [On-line]. Available: http://www.shhh.org/position/residual.html.

Self Help For Hard of Hearing People, Inc. (1998). Position statement on educating hard of hearing children in regular schools.[On-line].Available: http://www.shhh.org/position/educate.html.

White, K.R., Weirather, Y, Behrens, T.R., & Strickland, B. (1997, July/August). Realities, myths, and challenges of newborn hearing screening in the United States. CEEJOHNS, 3(4), 74-84.

Location and Process of the Policy Forum

The policy forum was held at the Gallaudet University Kellogg Convention Center in Washington, DC, September 14-15, 1998. The opening session began on Monday morning, September 14, with a welcome from Project FORUM and OSEP staff. Participants introduced themselves and Lou Danielson, Director of the Division of Research to Practice at OSEP gave an overview of the recent changes at the OSEP which served as a catalyst for the policy forum. The meeting facilitator, Karen Dahms, then reviewed the goals of the forum and led participants through the process of establishing ground rules for the discussion.

The meeting continued with a panel discussion of key issues related to the education of children and youth who are deaf and hard of hearing. The background materials were a starting point for the conversation and five of the policy forum members served as panelists to facilitate the discussion.

Judy Heumann, Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), Curtis Richards, Deputy Assistant Secretary of OSERS, and Tom Hehir, Director of OSEP joined the policy forum for a lunchtime dialogue. Following a brief address, Secretary Heumann and Dr. Hehir answered questions from the participants. After lunch, the participants worked in three small groups to develop goals for children and youth under each of the topic areas discussed earlier. Later that afternoon, a representative from each group summarized the discussion in a large group session, and all participants reviewed the goals that had been generated.

Tuesday morning, September 15, began with a large group review of Monday's work, which had been consolidated and edited the previous evening by Project FORUM staff and the facilitator. Participants reconvened in small groups, where they developed strategies to address the goals through OSEP Discretionary Programs. Following the large group review of the strategies, the participants generated more than 100 recommendations for future OSEP priorities. The recommendations were displayed and examined by participants. After allowing some time for final comments and additions, each participant was asked to vote for the 20 most important recommendations.

There was consensus from the group that many of the recommendations were overlapping and could be combined. Therefore, as a follow-up activity, the Project FORUM staff agreed to make changes to the prioritized list of recommendations based on feedback from the group and participants agreed to complete a second-stage ranking of the recommendations. The policy forum was adjourned at 5:00 PM on September 15. The policy forum agenda can be found in *Appendix B*; however, it

should be noted that the agenda was modified during the course of the policy forum and the narrative description above more accurately reflects the actual agenda.

Summary of Opening Remarks *by Lou Danielson, Director of Research to Practice, OSEP*

The focus of this meeting is the discretionary programs and future adjustments to this portion of IDEA. Among the changes made to the discretionary grant programs was a reduction in the number of programs from 14 specific areas to 6 more generic cross-cutting authorities and one national study activity. The new discretionary authorities are listed below.

- *Research and Development*. Seven (7) of the previous 14 programs were in this area, demonstrating OSEP's long-standing investment in this area.

- *Technical Assistance and Dissemination*. This area has been strongly supported by OSEP through the funding of projects such as Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) and clearinghouses. However, in the past, each item was considered an independent authority.

- *Personnel Preparation*. The area of personnel preparation continues to exist as it did before the reorganization.

- *Parent Information Centers*. This area was previously included as part of Personnel Preparation, but is now a stand-alone item.

- *Technology and Media*. These areas were previously represented by two separate authorities, but have been combined into one area.

- *State Improvement Grants (SIG)*. This is a completely new authority that is restricted to state education agencies (SEAs) and focuses on systemic improvement. Although only SEAs are eligible to apply for SIG funds, collaborative partnerships with other state entities are required under this authority. The first competition had a closing date of November 1, 1998.

- *Studies and Evaluations*. Funds have been set-aside under this new expanded authority to conduct a national assessment of the implementation of IDEA. The collection of data is being timed to inform the next reauthorization of IDEA.

Dr. Danielson highlighted previous OSEP investments, which reflected the various types of authorities that existed in the past, such as technology and personnel preparation. He emphasized that the new set of authorities was designed to support the implementation of IDEA, with the specific mission to improve results of students with disabilities.

The philosophy behind the restructuring of the discretionary grant programs also carried over to the new assignment of responsibilities at OSEP. For example, the emphasis on improving results for students with disabilities through informed practice is reflected in the new division title, *Research to Practice*. The previous structure of OSEP was thought to interfere with linkages

between various programs; therefore, the framework was revised to insure better communication and interaction. According to Dr. Danielson, assignments for OSEP staff now involve different types of projects within the same area of development, such as research or implementation. Before reauthorization, there were three divisions addressing the discretionary programs; now there is one division managing such programs. The areas represented under the discretionary program are not as strictly divided by disability as in the past. Instead, there is a mix of disability-specific programs and other more interdisciplinary activities.

The discretionary program is not meant to fund direct service programs, which are supported under formula grant programs. In the past, there was much planning in selected areas (such as technology) and little in others. The planning process has since become more comprehensive and considers all areas. The budget process reflects this as well. Funds are requested for each of the authorities and a comprehensive plan is required to support the single budget request. Coordination among service providers with overlapping missions across disability areas is encouraged. This strategy avoids fragmented services and addresses issues in a more efficient over-arching manner. The law requires that OSEP also engage in a comprehensive planning process and this policy forum is part of such planning.

Panel Discussion about Issue Areas

Five policy forum participants recommended background reading and served as panelists to facilitate a discussion of issues influencing the education of children and youth who are deaf and hard of hearing. The panelists included: Glenn Anderson from the University of Arkansas, Joseph Fischgrund from the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf, Robert Kretschmer from Columbia University's Teachers College, Carol Padden from the University of California at San Diego, and Karl White from Utah State University. Judith Cooper, Deputy Director of the Division of Human Communication at the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) submitted a background paper, but did not attend the policy forum. The following topics were covered as part of the panel discussion: early identification, language acquisition, communication, literacy, educational outcomes, personnel preparation, transition and other issues. The following is a summary of the major points raised by policy forum participants:

- One of the fundamental changes in the field over the past six to eight years is the ability to identify hearing loss early. However, it is a disservice to identify children who are deaf and hard of hearing and not go the next step to manage a program to meet their needs. There must be immediate services available when identification is made to avoid extensive "catching up" that has previously been needed due to a lack of early identification.

- The IDEA stresses full inclusion, but effective student-teacher communication is essential in the classroom to make it work. With the geographical dispersion of students who are deaf and hard of hearing and an inadequate number of qualified educational interpreters, full inclusion is often not successful. There was concern voiced about the quality of interpreter training programs, the decrease in the number of such programs, and the discontinuation of

training programs at the termination of their federal funding. In addition, the participants noted that there is a lack of research on the use of educational interpreters with small children.

- Personnel shortages were noted for the positions of supervisor, teacher and rehabilitation counselor. There seems to be more hiring of individuals with emergency credentials to teach students who are deaf.

- Reductions in funding are causing personnel preparation programs (pre-service) to become more generic, resulting in a dearth of teachers of the deaf well trained in content areas, especially at the secondary level.

- As a result of full inclusion, many students who are deaf do not have deaf role models. Deaf students need to learn from deaf teachers. Priority should be given to persons who are deaf in teacher preparation programs. In some cases, broader opportunities for youth with disabilities have created a lack of teachers who are deaf.

- It is critical to build relationships with the child's parents and extended family from the start. Teachers need preparation in how to relate to and help parents of students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

- Participants stressed the need for more research in the area of literacy. Many deaf adults have poor literacy skills, suggesting that they are not acquiring these skills in their school years. However, literacy levels on students who are deaf may be inaccurate because students who are fully included are tested with the general population of students. Disaggregated data may reflect those students who are deaf and cannot be educated in the general classroom due to other disabilities. It was suggested that OSEP revise their statistics and generate a new census that more accurately reflects the literacy skills of students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

- Research is needed that focuses on *process* and not *product*, such as language acquisition. Even if the research topic is specific, such as American Sign Language (ASL), the focus should be on how children acquire ASL skills. The successful teacher has to adjust the teaching process to meet individual student needs in a process approach, and it is necessary for teachers to have research-based information on process.

- When addressing the needs of students who are deaf and hard of hearing, there is a need to remain focused on what is going on in education in general, such as the standards movement currently underway in the United States. Otherwise, issues affecting the education of students who are deaf and hard of hearing may go in a different direction from the rest of education.

- Policy decisions made by states are not always appropriate for children who are deaf and hard of hearing. For example, eligibility decisions for children with hearing problems are

sometimes made using the same criteria—1.5 standard deviations below the mean on literacy tests—as for other children. Having high standards and expectations for *all* students, does not necessarily mean that the same criteria should be used. However, all children who are deaf and hard of hearing must see themselves as *learners*.

- There is concern about the growing number of children who are deaf and hard of hearing who live in poverty. The educational outcomes for these children are not as positive as for children who live in higher economic situations. This population needs to be a focus of educational efforts.

- Policy forum participants reflected on the three functions of schools: (1) custodial, (2) sorting and selecting (e.g., 9th grade algebra as the gatekeeper), and (3) teaching and learning. Much time is spent on the first two functions but not enough on the third (Lezotte, 1988).[1]

- Transition services for students who are deaf and hard of hearing are often inadequate, and there are few teachers of the deaf who are knowledgeable about the full array of transition issues (e.g., college, vocational training, mentoring). The world of work is changing rapidly and it is a challenge for schools to keep up with the changes and prepare students appropriately. There is a need to review the way students are counseled in making life choices. IDEA Part D states that there must be more emphasis on transition starting at age 14 and the policy forum participants considered this to be a positive trend.

- Students who leave high school and enroll in community colleges often enter a remedial type of program that fulfills more of a social need than a vocational goal. Community colleges need to address specific issues, such as literacy development, different learning styles, and the lifelong learning skills needed for transitions throughout one's career.

Lunchtime Dialogue *with Judy Heumann, Assistant Secretary of OSERS, Curtis Richards, Deputy Assistant Secretary of OSERS and Tom Hehir, Director of OSEP*

Secretary Heumann explained that this policy forum grew out of discussions with stakeholders about consideration of the needs of children who are deaf and hard of hearing. She worked for over a year to arrange this meeting and looks forward to seeing the results of the discussion. Secretary Heumann made the following two main points in her opening remarks:

- It is important for all students—including students with disabilities—to get the support they need to move into careers of their choice. "[I]t is critically important that *all means all* becomes a reality." In education, the *high standards issue* poses challenges for students with

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[1] Lezotte, L. (1988). Effective schools. Lecture presented to the New York State Department of Education, Albany, NY.

disabilities. For many, *all means all* has not yet become a reality, and it is even more imperative to address these issues concerning low incidence populations.

- OSERS should not be the only source of funding to meet the needs of students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Other funding streams, such as Bilingual Education and Title I, should be more broadly involved to link programs to children with hearing loss. The U.S. Department of Education is fortunate to have Gallaudet University located nearby because it is a valuable resource for hiring individuals. However, such resources are often lacking in other low incidence areas.

Tom Hehir commented that we do not know enough about many of the critical issues related to the education of students who are deaf and hard of hearing. He posed the following questions: *What does the literacy status of children who are deaf mean for our [OSEP] research investments? What has not been done that could help?* If the federal government does not address these questions, there are really very few other sources for such efforts.

Another area of critical interest is personnel preparation. Most states do not invest in the preparation of teachers of low incidence disabilities. Children with low incidence disabilities are often overlooked among competing priorities because of their relatively small numbers. These policy forums provide useful information to OSEP. Dr. Hehir stressed the importance of the policy forum by stating that two years ago OSEP had a similar meeting on blindness and this year's priorities are directly tied to the outcomes of that forum.

Dr. Hehir reinforced the comments made by Dr. Danielson in the opening session by saying, "OSEP is trying hard to connect its discretionary efforts to the monitoring of state implementation of IDEA." Dr. Hehir introduced Suzy Rosen, a representative of OSEP's monitoring branch in attendance at the policy forum meeting, and said that the monitoring branch is working to ensure that the system is sensitive enough to identify the needs of children with low incidence special needs. He closed by saying that the forum "is not the end of your communication with OSEP. We will look for your continued input as we attempt to act on your recommendations."

The issue of access for individuals who are deaf or blind, especially in the employment arena, is not being addressed across the country, commented Secretary Heumann. She reminded participants that the Department adopted guidelines on access when purchasing equipment, and encourages national organizations to stress the critical role of including individuals with disabilities in efforts surrounding future planning and Year 2000 issues. Access needs to be an integral part of employment and other issues being discussed.

Following opening remarks, participants discussed the issues summarized below with Secretary Heumann and Dr. Hehir.

- In many states, the phrase "natural environments" is being interpreted in ways that may be educationally harmful to infants and toddlers who are deaf. For example, a profoundly deaf child in a daycare center is expected to read lips in this natural environment; however, a

signing program for toddlers who are deaf would be more helpful. The latter program is NOT considered natural and, therefore, NOT reimbursable. Secretary Heumann responded that it is not the intent of the statute to restrict an appropriate education stating, "Certainly, a child who is just sitting in a 'natural environment' is not getting an appropriate education." Dr. Hehir added that OSEP will be clarifying the "natural environments" issue as soon as regulations are out. "It is not enough to bring a child into a program, the family must be included also, and the program must work with the child where s/he is most of the time so that skills can be reinforced," stated Dr. Hehir.

- There is a concern about the absence of an effective mechanism for longitudinal follow-up in the field of hearing loss. Secretary Heumann mentioned a number of possibilities for collaborating with other offices, such as the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI). Dr. Danielson stated that ten years ago there was a competition for follow-along studies as model projects. Now, there is a set of performance indicators at OSEP to hold the Department accountable and outcomes will be tracked. IDEA also calls for data (e.g., dropouts, etc.) and OSEP is hoping that states will do the same thing. Dr. Danielson stated, "We hope that this will play out down to the local level so that schools and districts will be looking at data like that."

A Gallaudet University representative participating in the policy forum noted that the University will be putting out a request for collaboration on a follow-up being used with Gallaudet graduates. A few schools will be asked to use this model to track their graduates and there will be some funds available. This is a response to the field's concern about what happens to students when they leave school.

In response to a comment about innovative research in the area of deaf children and a question about the field initiated competition, the OSEP staff agreed that literacy could be a major focus of research, and encouraged collaborative efforts and broad syntheses. According to Secretary Heumann, OSEP has been spending much time in OSERS trying to coordinate future directions.

Dr. Hehir referred to RSA's recent work on reading, which included a section on deafness and was structured to be inclusive of all children. He closed by saying, "We have to protect our resources with directed priorities to be sure that the needs of low incidence children are included in research."

Goals for the Education of Children and Youth Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Policy forum participants generated the following goals during the meeting and were later asked to select the 20 most important. Of the twenty-five 25 participants, 20 participated in this prioritization exercise. The topic areas have been organized to reflect the priority given to them by the participants who prioritized the individual goals, and are listed according to the total number of votes received from highest to lowest. Please note that many of the goals received equal ranking by participants.

Personnel Preparation

10 votes:	Address teacher and educational administrator shortages (e.g, examine recruitment practices).
9 votes:	Increase the knowledge of administrators with responsibility for students who are deaf and hard of hearing, not only through staff development, but also through programs specifically for training administrators who supervise deaf and hard of hearing students in educational programs.
7 votes:	Develop a national database of resources for personnel development, including schools for the deaf serving as regional resources for information on personnel and services for deaf students, particularly in rural settings.
7 votes:	Prepare educators to work with students who come from diverse linguistic, cultural economic backgrounds.
7 votes:	Evaluate, expand and improve programs for training educational interpreters and identify programs that foster early recruitment into the interpreting field.
7 votes:	Develop models of teacher preparation that are comprehensive and ongoing (in the form of professional development - emphasize inservice).
6 votes:	Link teacher preparation to research on teaching and learning with linkage going both ways.
6 votes:	Ensure all personnel are certified, qualified, and appropriately trained to provide early identification and intervention services.
5 votes:	Train professionals to work with parents/families on literacy issues.
5 votes:	Provide professional development for general educators in the area of deafness and hard of hearing.
5 votes:	Support existing teacher preparation programs and create new ones.
5 votes:	Prepare all teachers to work in partnership with families.
5 votes:	Encourage deaf and hard of hearing individuals to be leaders and role models in areas such as policy, research, teacher education, and teaching.
2 votes:	Recruit more deaf and hard of hearing people into teaching.

2 votes: Develop training programs for transcribers of computerized notetaking.

2 votes: Promote increased language and student development training for residential staff personnel.

1 vote: Develop new techniques for teacher education (e.g., distance learning).

1 vote: Increase training available to allied professionals, auxiliary personnel (e.g., art, PE), and those involved with special populations (e.g., medically fragile).

1 vote: Increase educators' skills in such areas as technology and sign language.

1 vote: Link teacher education programs with certification and license requirements to ensure that they enhance teaching and do not block opportunities.

1 vote: Participate in the meetings of national organizations such as AASA to provide information on issues related to the education of deaf and hard of hearing.

No votes: Identify models that demonstrate how educators working with emergency (temporary) credentials can receive guidance from experienced teachers or administrators in the school.

Early Identification/Early Intervention

13 votes: Implement universal newborn hearing screening nationwide with coordination between education and health.

11 votes: Establish a better process for informing parents of the full spectrum of options following identification (promote full value-free disclosure).

10 votes: Develop a process for integrating early identification with early management of intervention services.

7 votes: Identify hearing loss by three months of onset and provide appropriate services within three months of identification.

4 votes: Coordinate state efforts directed at identification and intervention.

4 votes: Target under-served populations that are likely to be missed in non-hospital based or other later screening programs, such as families from rural and inner city areas and those children from minority groups.

4 votes: Improve communication between the medical community and education providers especially at the state level on such critical issues as cochlear implants.

4 votes: Ensure the implementation of family-centered services utilizing best practices in early intervention (e.g., family support and counseling).

4 votes: Ensure early and consistent access to the language or languages in the environment.

4 votes: Provide family support for those children who are diagnosed late.

3 votes: Implement models of early intervention which promote age-appropriate language for students who are deaf and hard of hearing by school age.

2 votes: Provide all agencies serving children and families with information about services and resources.

Educational Outcomes

14 votes: Examine the outcomes of deaf and hard of hearing students who have been educated in general education settings.

12 votes: Ensure that deaf and hard of hearing students have the same content exposure and educational outcomes as their hearing peers.

8 votes: Conduct research on effective teaching and learning paradigms for children with and without family involvement.

6 votes: Develop functional assessment tools to evaluate educational outcomes. Support research development and implementation of a broad range of educational assessment necessary to improve the quality of education.

4 votes: Identify strategies to improve educational outcomes for students who are deaf and have other disabilities.

4 votes: Identify and provide opportunities to achieve outcomes that are unique and essential to students who are deaf and hard of hearing (e.g., code switching).

3 votes: Engage families in the process of reaching positive outcomes.

3 votes: Conduct research on the effect of organizational structures in schools (supervision, monitoring) and educational polices on educational outcomes.

3 votes: Ensure that students who are deaf and hard of hearing will have the knowledge, skills and abilities to select from an array of options for self-determination (e.g., social and cultural identities, work).

2 votes: Include students who are deaf and hard of hearing in statewide assessment, when appropriate.

1 vote: Reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of the student population in the workforce.

Language Acquisition

12 votes: Synthesize research on language acquisition in hearing, deaf, and hard of hearing children to determine directions for future research.

9 votes: Conduct research to assess the impact of cochlear implants on speech perception, speech development and language acquisition.

9 votes: Research the effects of technology on language acquisition (e.g., computerized note-taking, closed captioning).

7 votes: Apply what is known about language acquisition and the organization of language to practice.

6 votes: Ensure that all service providers have the knowledge, skills and competencies to facilitate language acquisition, working in partnership/collaboration with parents/families.

4 votes: Ensure that language acquisition needs are addressed in the IFSP in a way parallel to Part B.

2 votes: NIDCD research agenda should be reflected/integrated with OSEP research.

Literacy

12 votes: Synthesize the research and information about literacy in areas such as: content areas for older students; what constitutes successful readers; factors related to reading difficulties (e.g., vision, speech perception, inner speech); and reading difficulties related to chronic otitis media.

11 votes: Identify literacy programs that work and replicate them.

9 votes: Raise the literacy level of students who are deaf and hard of hearing to levels comparable to hearing peers.

9 votes: Conduct and apply research on the relationship between cognition, achievement and literacy.

8 votes: Increase funding for studies that evaluate the various pathways to literacy development in students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

7 votes: Focus on process not products. Research on the reading process of deaf children who are successful readers is missing.

6 votes: Base literacy expectations for deaf and hard of hearing students on national, state and local standards.

1 vote: All individuals involved in the delivery/receipt of educational services will demonstrate bi/multilingual literacy. (Literacy includes skills in English, American Sign Language and possibly a third language.)

Communication

12 votes: Assess the value of educational interpreting for students who are deaf and hard of hearing at all educational levels, including their roles. (e.g., When is it effective and appropriate to use interpreters? What are the effects of introducing a third person into the teaching-learning process?)

9 votes: Ensure that all students who are deaf and hard of hearing have opportunities for direct communication with both peers and adults in all educational settings (i.e., classrooms and all other school- related activities).

8 votes: Ensure that the communication needs of all identified deaf and hard of hearing infants and toddlers including the need for direct communication for peers and caregivers are considered in the development and implementation of the IFSP.

7 votes: Develop national standards for the evaluation and certification of educational interpreters.

6 votes: Ensure families have the skills necessary to meet the communication needs of their children.

6 votes: Develop and validate instruments to evaluate communication skills of teachers in the classroom.

6 votes: Conduct research on the communication needs of students who are deaf and hard of hearing and have other disabilities.

4 votes: Develop and promote the use of varied communication options (e.g., computerized note-taking, text to sign).

4 votes: Conduct research on the efficacy of captioning and the differing learning styles of students.

3 votes: Facilitate an accessible communication environment (e.g., visual, auditory and tactile) in education and home settings. Deaf students must be made aware of the availability of interpreters and technology to meet their needs.

Transition

11 votes: Identify exemplary models of transition from school to work.

7 votes: Identify and develop models to follow graduates longitudinally over 20 years or more.

7 votes: Address social, emotional, cultural, and work-related issues when promoting language acquisition.

6 votes: Develop cooperative relationships between education and vocational rehabilitation

6 votes: Disseminate and promote the implementation of best practice models for career education in the early years.

5 votes: Develop strategies to train employers on issues related to effective recruitment, hiring and career development of deaf and hard of hearing workers.

2 votes: Involve employers in the transition planning process.

Recommendations for Future Federal Support in the Area of Deafness and Hard of Hearing

The following recommendations were originally developed by the policy forum participants during the meeting, edited and consolidated by the Project FORUM staff after the meeting, and sent to all participants for prioritization. Participants were asked to select the 20 recommendations of highest priority. Of the 25 policy forum participants, 21 submitted prioritized recommendations. The topic areas have been organized to reflect the priority given to them by the participants who prioritized recommendations, and are listed according to the total number of votes received from highest to lowest. Please note that many of the recommendations received equal ranking by participants.

Personnel Preparation

14 votes: Require all applications for funding in the area of personnel preparation to demonstrate the following: (a) how teachers are prepared to enable students to meet state and local standards; (b) how teacher's sign communication skills are developed and measured; (c) how the program includes current knowledge about the teaching

and learning process, language acquisition, and reading/writing development; (d) how the program prepares teachers to meet the unique language and communication needs of students who are deaf and hard of hearing; and (e) how the program prepares professionals to work in partnership with parents.

12 votes: Support in-service dissemination projects that bring recent research to educators for the purpose of improving instruction for children who are deaf and hard of hearing, and provide specialized knowledge (e.g., infant/preschool, severely emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, multi-disabled, deaf-blind).

11 votes: Expand and increase funding for certification and personnel preparation programs that prepare the following service providers: early childhood professionals (birth to five years), secondary teachers, educational interpreters, counselors, psychologists, and language and computer specialists (including computer assisted note-takers). Address both pre-service and in-service professional development needs.

10 votes: Fund professional development programs that actively recruit and retain candidates who are deaf and hard of hearing and from diverse racial/ethnic/linguistic backgrounds.

9 votes: Fund national centers that specialize in preparing administrators to work with students who are deaf and hard of hearing, and support the preparation of personnel for other leadership positions.

8 votes: Provide funding for teacher preparation programs that focus on students who are deaf and hard of hearing and have other special needs (multi-disabled, gifted, severely emotionally disturbed).

4 votes: Fund professional development programs that lead to dual certification.

4 votes: Fund cross-disciplinary (educational and medical) preparation of professionals who conduct newborn hearing screening and diagnose hearing loss in 0-6 month old infants.

1 vote: Fund professional development programs that develop model certification programs in cooperation with the program certification credentialing agency.

Literacy

18 votes: Fund longitudinal studies on literacy development in children who are deaf and hard of hearing who use different communication methods (e.g., ASL, signed English).

13 votes: Fund projects that synthesize and disseminate research and information about literacy development and current knowledge about the organization of language (e.g., English, Spanish, ASL, and/or other languages) in children who are deaf and hard of hearing.

11 votes: Support the research, development, validation, and implementation of a broad range of appropriate educational assessment instruments, both qualitative and quantitative, to improve the quality of information available to educators and families on literacy. This includes functional assessment of literacy skills in students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

9 votes: Develop, conduct and apply research on the relationships between and among cognition, literacy and educational achievement.

4 votes: Support research that investigates the relationship of literacy and social emotional development, in collaboration with other federal funding agencies (e.g., NIMH).

Educational Outcomes

17 votes: Fund longitudinal studies (5-10 years) that focus on employment of youth who are deaf and hard of hearing, and compare outcome data with hearing youth.

13 votes: Fund model demonstration projects that lead to the equitable educational achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

8 votes: Fund research on the impact of the social environment on the learning and achievement of students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

7 votes: Identify, disseminate and/or develop strong educational programs for students who are deaf and hard of hearing and have other disabilities.

Language Acquisition

13 votes: Prepare and disseminate a well-documented collaborative research report on language acquisition in hearing, deaf, and hard of hearing children with a focus on reading/writing, oral/aural English, and sign language skills.

13 votes: Fund research on the relationship between exposure to/use of ASL and language acquisition, such as: (a) evaluative studies of the impact of intensive exposure to ASL on language acquisition (in ASL and English) of deaf children with hearing parents; (b) studies of the relationship between developing competence in ASL and trajectories of reading development; or (c) development and analysis of materials used to evaluate ASL acquisition for toddlers and young children.

9 votes: Fund research on the effects of the use of technology on language acquisition in children who are deaf and hard of hearing.

9 votes: Support projects that teach families of children who are deaf and hard of hearing to involve their children in pre-reading and reading activities.

Early Identification/ Early Intervention

18 votes: Fund research and model demonstration projects that identify and demonstrate effective ways of meeting the unique language and communication needs of infants and children who are deaf, as well as those who have mild, moderate or unilateral hearing loss. Such projects should: (a) address the need for direct communication with peers and care-givers, (b) provide intensive support, counseling, and education for families, and (c) include collaboration with universities, schools, and state agencies.

13 votes: Fund model state-wide projects that demonstrate early hearing detection and intervention (EHDI) tracking and information systems and link them to existing public health information systems (e.g. electronic birth certificates, birth defects, lead screening, metabolic screening, WIC, etc.). Such projects should be hospital-based, provide replicable models and materials, and be sustainable beyond federal funding.

8 votes: Establish and evaluate model statewide/regional early intervention technical assistance centers to disseminate information on hearing loss and educational options to: (1) families with infants or children who are Deaf and hard of hearing and (2) allied medical, educational, and mental health community agencies.

Communication

11 votes: Continue to identify, develop, and support communication technologies that facilitate interpersonal communication involving one or more persons who are deaf and hard of hearing (e.g. telecommunication devices, auditory devices, speech-to-text devices – including captioning), and evaluate the influence of each on language acquisition.

7 votes: Fund research to develop a model program that will ensure that students who are deaf and hard of hearing are aware and capable of utilizing the various and latest means of communication accommodations (e.g., working effectively with interpreters and real time captioning), and support professional development programs based on the most recent research findings (e.g., examine the efficacy and appropriateness of using educational and ASL specialists, and study the role of interpreting in early childhood and early elementary education).

7 votes: Fund the dissemination of model programs (e.g., on-site consultation and training, instructional videotapes, curricula, and follow-up mentoring) in which sign language

instruction is provided to facilitate communication among hearing, deaf and hard of hearing groups in such ways as: (a) providing instruction for all hearing students in neighborhood schools attended by children who are deaf and hard of hearing, or (b) developing an ASL curriculum for parents of children who use ASL.

4 votes: Develop and validate instruments to evaluate the communication abilities (e.g., sign language, spoken language, nonverbal supplements) of classroom teachers and paraprofessionals.

Transition

15 votes: Fund projects that demonstrate and disseminate exemplary models of career education and school-to-work transition (for high, middle, and low achieving students) that incorporate technology; span multiple grade levels; involve partnerships between schools, employers, vocational rehabilitation, and post-secondary programs; and result in strong educational outcomes.

4 votes: Identify, research and fund regional transition models for students who are deaf and hard of hearing that have a strong parent involvement segment (e.g., to encourage students to want to work, and to support parents and families in understanding and assuming their critical but changing roles).

3 votes: Fund research on job-related skills that are necessary for promotion/advancement (e.g., obtain data from employers of those who are deaf and hard of hearing).

2 votes: Fund research and transition models that demonstrate strong employer focus on recruitment, accommodations, career development and career pathways.

Other Issues

10 votes: Revise and up-date NASDSE's *Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students: Educational Service Guidelines*, and provide technical assistance to SEAs and LEAs for implementation of these guidelines.

10 votes: Implement *The Commission on Education of the Deaf* recommendation #20, which reads: "The Congress should establish one comprehensive service center in each of the ten federal regions of the United States. These centers may be located in existing facilities or may be stand-alone units. The Commission further recommends that the comprehensive service centers be funded through a competitive bid process." (1988)

9 votes: Support parent training projects (PTIs) in their efforts to appropriately serve parents/families of deaf and hard of hearing infants and toddlers, preschoolers, children, youth and young adults (e.g. fund development and implementation of a

technical assistance project to work cooperatively with PACER, TAPP Regions, and/or individual PTIs to raise level of competence regarding deaf and hard of hearing issues and services).

8 votes: Provide technical assistance to SEAs on how to appropriately interpret and implement the special considerations in IDEA for students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

7 votes: Fund research that examines the social-emotional development of middle and secondary school students who are hard of hearing and are educated with hearing students.

6 votes: Conduct research to determine how to maximize residual hearing for students who are hard of hearing in classrooms.

6 votes: Fund model projects that demonstrate best practices in the provision of equal educational opportunity to students who are deaf and hard of hearing through educational interpreting and related accommodations.

6 votes: Facilitate an OSERS-wide effort to address the recommendations being proposed by the policy forum participants through joint OSEP, RSA, NIDRR priority-setting.

5 votes: Disseminate (through on-site consultation and training, instructional video, written materials and follow-up mentoring) proven models of support and training for parents in strategies of behavior management for young children who are deaf and hard of hearing.

5 votes: Fund model demonstration programs where students who are deaf and hard of hearing have access to the general education curriculum, are held to local and state standards, and are included in reports to the general public.

5 votes: Develop diagnostic and measurement guidelines that determine the effectiveness of local, state and national education programs for students who are deaf and hard of hearing (e.g., literacy programs).

5 votes: Fund research to identify effective public school organizational structures, key design factors, and policies and funding systems (at the federal, state and local levels) that promote strong educational outcomes.

5 votes: Fund a clearinghouse mechanism to disseminate and promote implementation of best practices across disciplines.

5 votes:	Provide funds to develop recruitment models for personnel serving children and youth who are deaf and hard of hearing, for example: (a) recruiting from the pool of parents/family members; (b) providing incentives such as funding, stipends, and zero percent student loans; and (c) funding the development of a national database of personnel with specific background knowledge and skills necessary for working with people who are deaf and hard of hearing.
3 votes:	Develop a functional measure (or measures) to distinguish between children who are deaf and those who are hard of hearing.
2 votes:	Fund school/program-based research projects.
2 votes:	Fund projects that ensure accessibility for deaf and hard of hearing people in all media and technology (e.g., need to be sure that all computer software is captioned).
1 vote:	Fund demonstration projects in different geographical locations across the country.
1 vote:	Fund programs that emphasize consumer (deaf and hard of hearing) involvement as principal investigators, researchers, faculty, teachers, staff, administrators, and other leaders.
No votes:	Establish policies and funding mechanisms to ensure that all educational activities and materials are accessible to people who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Next Steps

Prioritized goals and recommendations will be used by OSEP staff in the crafting of new priorities. The document containing the proceedings of this policy will be disseminated to the field.

Appendix A
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Education of Children and Youth Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing:
Past, Present, and Future Federal Support
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Appendix B
Policy Forum Agenda

Education of Children and Youth Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing: Past, Present and Future Federal Support

Policy Forum - September 14 & 15, 1998

Agenda

Goals:

- *To review past and present IDEA Part D priorities regarding education of children and youth who are deaf and hard of hearing*
- *To begin to develop a plan for implementing future Part D-supported work to improve results for children and youth who are deaf and hard of hearing*

Monday, September 14, 1998

8:00-9:00	Buffet breakfast	
9:00-9:10	Welcome from Project FORUM Meeting Logistics	*Joy Markowitz*
9:10-9:40	Participant introductions	*All*
9:40-10:10	Welcome from OSEP Overview of past funding Overview of current OSEP funding structure Process for developing the comprehensive plan for Part D Restructuring of discretionary programs	*Lou Danielson*
10:10-10:30	Goals of meeting Review of agenda Ground rules	*Karen Dahms*
10:30-10:45	Break	
10:45-11:45	Panel discussion about issue areas Issue areas: early identification, language acquisition, communication, literacy, educational outcomes, personnel preparation, transition	*Panelists*
11:45-12:00	Describe small group tasks and assignments	*Karen Dahms*
12:00-2:00	Lunchtime discussion with: Judy Heumann - Assistant Secretary, OSERS Curtis Richards - Deputy Assistant Secretary, OSERS Tom Hehir - Director, OSEP	

2:00-3:00	Goals for children and youth in issue areas	*Small groups*
3:00-3:15	Break	
3:15-3:45	Large group review of goals	*Karen Dahms*
3:45-4:45	Strengths and areas for future improvement	*Small groups*
4:45-5:00	Assess progress of day and make plan for Tuesday	*Karen Dahms*
5:00	Adjourn for day	

<u>Tuesday, September 15, 1998</u>

8:00-9:00	Buffet breakfast	
9:00-9:10	Announcements	*Joy Markowitz*
9:10-9:30	Large group review of previous day's work	*Karen Dahms*
9:30-10:30	Strategies to address goals through the discretionary programs	*Small groups*
10:30-10:45	Break	
10:45-11:15	Large group review of strategies	*Karen Dahms*
11:15-12:15	Generation of recommendations for future OSEP priorities	*Small groups*
12:15-1:15	Lunch (at GUKCC)	
1:15-2:00	Large group review of recommendations	*Karen Dahms*
2:00-3:00	Prioritization activity	*Karen Dahms*
3:00-3:15	Break	
3:15-4:15	Finalization of recommendations	*Karen Dahms*
4:15-5:00	Next steps	*Joy Markowitz & OSEP*
5:00	Adjourn policy forum	